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Ficus caulocarpa Miq. and *F. costata* Ait. (Moraceae) - Additions to the Flora of India

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Abstract

Occurrence of *Ficus caulocarpa* Miq. and *F. costata* Ait. in India is reported.

INTRODUCTION

The genus *Ficus* L. is reported to have 37 taxa (species and infraspecific) in South India (Fischer, 1928; Rani, 1985; Henry *et al.* 1987); of these, 30 are indigenous and the rest exotics, mostly grown as ornamental plants. Among the 30 indigenous *Ficus* in South India, 17 occur in Sri Lanka also (Corner, 1981), showing the affinity between the floras of these two regions. Two collections of *Ficus* made during our studies on the flora of the protected Areas in Kerala Forests didn't agree with the species reported from South India. On further studies with relevant literature (Corner, 1965 & 1981) proved that they are *F. caulocarpa* Miq. and *C. costata* Ait. The former has a distribution from Sri Lanka to Solomon Islands, through Myanmar, Malaysia and Indonesia and the latter is confined to Sri Lanka (Corner, 1981). Though *F. caulocarpa* Miq. has a fairly wide distribution in Asia, it has not been recorded from India. Brief descriptions, notes and illustrations are provided to facilitate easy identification. The specimens cited are deposited in the Kerala Forest Research Instiute Herbarium (KFRI).

Ficus caulocarpa Miq., Ann. Mus. Bot. Lugduno Batavum 3 : 268. 1867; Corner, Gard. Bull. Singapore 21: 10.1965 & in Dsassan. & Fosberg, Rev. Handb. Fl. Ceylon 3: 240. 1981.

F. infectoria Miq. var. *caulocarpa* (Miq.) King, Ann. Roy. Bot. Gard. Calcutta 1:63, t. 79. 1887.

Large trees with aerial roots, bole buttressed; bark grey, smooth, branchlets glabrous. Leaves 10-19 x 4-10 cm, ovate-oblong, acuminate, acumen to 1 cm long, rounded to subcordate or slightly cuneate at base, coriaceous, glabrous; lateral nerves 10-14 pairs, faint towards margins, looping irregularly, intercosate subdistinct; petiole 4-7.5 cm long, articulated and deciduous at base of

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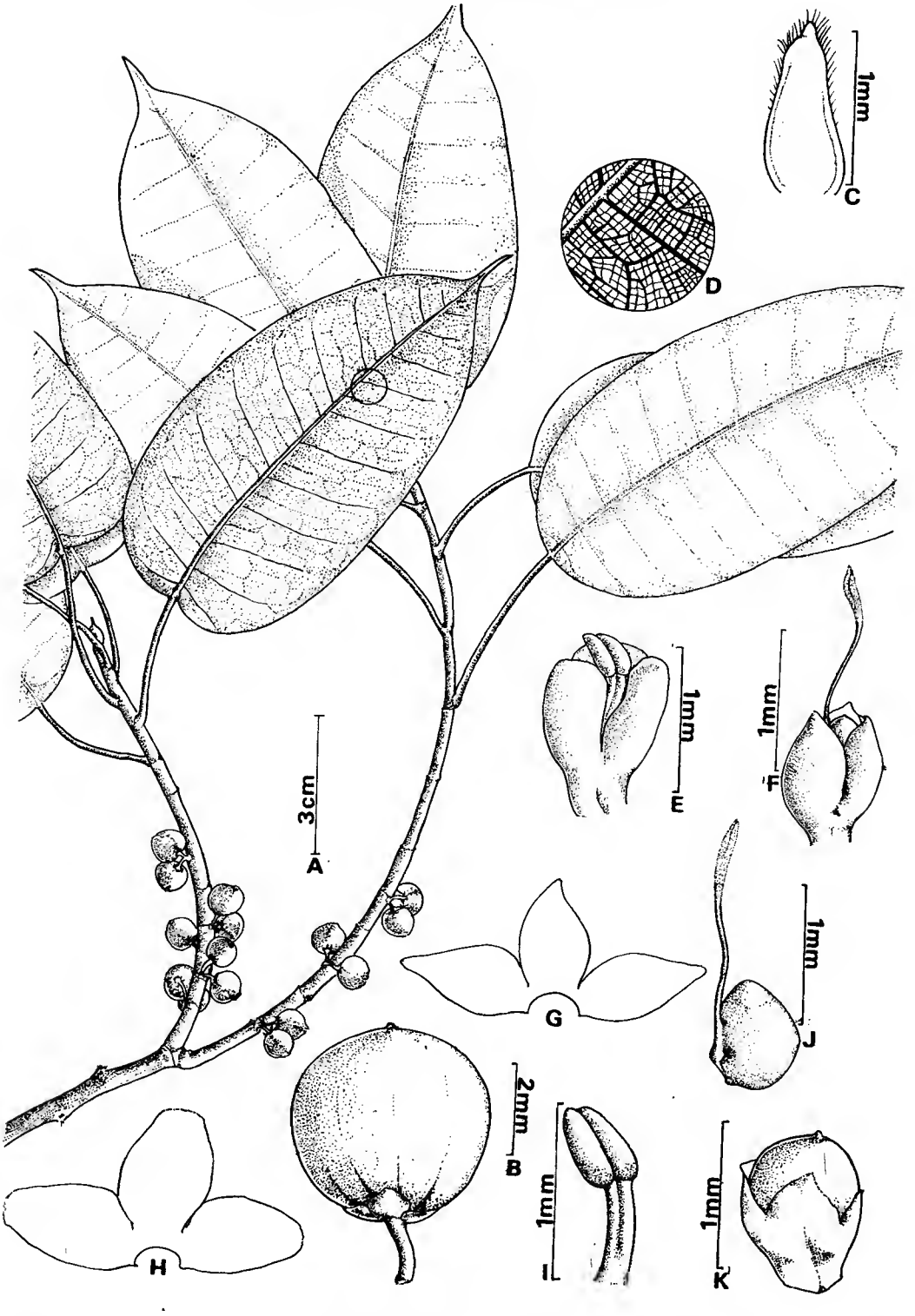

Fig. 1. *Ficus costata* Ait : A. Flowering twig; B. Young fig; C. Stipule; D. Portion of leaf showing nervations; E. Male flower; F. Female flower; G. Perianth of female flower; H. Perianth of male flower; I. Stamen; J. Pistil; K. Seed.

lamina; stipules 12-15 mm long, ovate, grey puberulous. Receptacle 2-6 together in the axils of leaf scars, appear before flushing, 7 mm across, globose, white; peduncle *ca.* 3 mm long, puberulous; bracteoles 4, orbicular, 3 mm across, puberulous, attached at the base of peduncles.

Flowering and Fruiting : March - May

Specimen Examined : Kerala, Idukki District, Periyar Tiger Reserve, *Jomy Augustine* 13523

Note : *F. caulocarpa* Miq. resembles *F. tsjahela* Burm. f., in the general shape of the leaves and crowded small receptacles. But can easily be distinguished from it by the articulated and deciduous petiole, faint venation of leaves and pedunculed receptacles.

Ficus costata Ait., Hort. Kew. 3 : 452. 1789; Corner, Gard. Bull. Singapore 17: 379. 1960 & in Dassan. & Fosberg, Rev. Handb. Fl. Ceylon 3 : 246. 1981. (Fig. 1).

F. caudiculata Trimen, J. Bot. 23:242. 1885 & Handb. Fl. Ceylon 4:88. 1898; King, Ann. Roy. Bot. Gard. Calcutta 1: 48, Pl. 58A. 1887; Hook.f., Fl. Brit. India 5: 510. 1888.

F. mooniana King, Ann. Roy. Bot. Gard. Calcutta 1 : 57. Pl. 69. 1887; Hook. f., Fl. Brit. India 5: 514. 1888.

Medium trees, rarely epiphytic; branchlets slender, glabrous. Leaves to 11-15 x 4-7.5 cm, ovate-oblong, abruptly acuminate at apex, acumen to 1 cm long, subcordate at base, reddish-brown when dried, subcoriaceous; lateral nerves 14-18 pairs, jointed below the margin into a narrow intramarginal vein, intercostae prominent, minutely aereolate below; petiole 3-4 cm long. Receptacles paired, axillary, *ca.* 8 mm across, smooth or scurfy when young, yellow, turning to red when ripe; peduncles 5-8 mm long, glabrous; bracteoles 3, suborbicular, to 2.5 x 4.5 mm, inserted at the apex of the peduncle.

Flowering and Fruiting : October-January

Specimens examined : Kerala, Thrissur District, Poringasl, *N. Sasidharan* 4943; Idukki District, Periyar Tiger Reserve, *Jomy Augustine* 12742

Note : *Ficus costata* Ait. resembles *F. arnottiana* (Miq.) Miq. in the reddish-brown colour of dried leaves and peduncled and paired receptacles of same size; but can be distinguished by rounded or subcordate leaf base, more number of lateral veins (14-18 pairs) and prominent intercostae and minute aereole beneath against the cordate leaf base, fewer number of lateral veins (5-7 pairs) and faint intercostae beneath in *F. arnottiana* (Miq.) Miq.

Acknowledgement

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